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We are moving

Our new location and mailing address as of
June 27, 2014 will be Common Ground, 3152 West
8th Ave, Vancouver, BC, V6K 2C3. Our tele-
phone, websites and emails remain the same.
We are moving back into the Kitsilano nei-
ghbourhood where Common Ground first began in
1982. This is a vibrant community with many fine

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This year's topic of discussion

GMO "HOW DOES IT AFFECT US AS CANADIANS?"



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GMO Author/ Activist



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Kids Right to Know



IAN WALKER
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Udo Erasmus

Interview by Joseph Roberts

Udo's Oil – from pesticide poisoning to a health recovery inspiring a billion dollar organic oil industry

Joseph Roberts When did you become seriously sick?

Udo Erasmus I was 35 years old and married with three kids when my marriage broke up. I was very upset and basically wanted to kill something so I got a job as a pesticide sprayer. I knew better because I hung around with the Greenpeace guys Robert Hunter, Paul Watson, and other founders. We'd talk about the balance of nature and I'd studied biological sciences so I had a pretty good handle on that subject and I knew that pesticides are poisons. But I was really upset so I went and sprayed them.

I sprayed herbicides walking barefoot through the lawns I sprayed until the skin started peeling off my feet. Then I thought maybe that's not a good idea so I wore rubber boots. It was a summer job and I was vain because I always liked to have a nice tan so I used to drive my tractor with my big tank on the back wearing a bathing suit and rubber boots. One person said to me, "You're missing a black tie." So the wind would drift the spray on my back and I never wore a mask. I did this full-time over the summer for three years.

Q What company did you work for?

A The company was David Hunter's Landscape Nurseries. I'd taken an exam to become a pesticide sprayer and got 99.5%. I sprayed everything. The Imperial Oil Company had an oil refinery on the north shore of Burrard Inlet, near Port Moody, BC, called Ioco. There were big oil storage tanks, which were surrounded with earth dams because if the tank breaks, the oil comes out, but it's contained. Weeds start growing in there so I would go around and kill the weeds with soil sterilants. I sprayed fungicides, herbicides and insecticides on the grounds of big companies.

One day, after spraying soil sterilants at Ioco we went into their employees' lunchroom and they told us we couldn't clean up in there. I guess they didn't want pesticides in their lunchroom.

Q They didn't want you to toxify their eating environment.

A Yeah, they were okay with us spraying it there, but... So, anyway, I ate a sandwich without washing my hands and I know it was on my fingers and that afternoon I got really sick. I was totally laid out. I ended up with no energy, which of course is how pesticides kill; they destroy your energy production system or poison your brain. I ended up with cramps, nausea and dizziness. If I turned my head, it felt like I turned my head but my brain didn't move. I was 38 and always had lots of energy so the worst symptom was now I was like an old man. If I walked around a city block, I would have to sit down and rest.



☺

**When people get celiac disease
or irritable bowel or colitis
or any one of many digestive
disorders, it's more likely to
come from the herbicides on the
grains not from the protein**

That was pretty hard to take. So I called the government agency responsible for poison control or toxicology and said I'd been poisoned by pesticides and asked what I should do. They tried to tell me I just had the flu because some of the symptoms are flu-like. I was shocked. They had nothing for pesticide poisoning.

Q One of the herbicides you sprayed contained glyphosate, which is used extensively on genetically modified food crops.

A Better known as "Round-Up." I started spraying pesticides in 1976 and Monsanto's Round-Up's main

active ingredient is glyphosate. I was told – and it said on the labels – that when you spray Round-Up, it's really safe because the soil inactivates it. And I thought, "How cool is that. You spray pesticide on a weed which absorbs it all the way into the root, killing the root and literally exterminating the plant so there's not going to be any regrowth." So it became the weed-killer of choice, especially because it was supposedly inactivated on contact with the soil.

Q The chemical glyphosate was first used as an industrial pipe-cleaner to chelate and extract all the minerals from pipes and boilers. So it does the same to a plant and starves the plant of all the minerals it needs in order to live.

A For more than 20 years, it said on the label that it inactivated when it hit the soil, but it turned out it wasn't true. Unfortunately, the lie became folk wisdom. There was no court case about it and almost nothing in the newspapers.

Q There may have been a corporate damage control PR campaign to bury the story.

A The FDA did make the producers remove that wording from the label, but there was no court case and they didn't get dinged for misrepresentation. There was very little news about it. I was shocked, but then something happened which shocked me even more.

Recently, I saw an article about glyphosate and found out that, not only is it sprayed on the weeds, but they actually spray it on food crops, especially grains and soy beans. They spray it on the grain before they harvest it because it turns out you can spray it on wheat that isn't ripe yet and it desiccates the grain, which means the water evaporates. It breaks up the water metabolism, making it more porous to dry quicker so it can be harvested earlier.

But you end up with glyphosate on your food. This is the weed killer that messes up mineral metabolism, among other things. Now, they're beginning to say that when people get celiac disease or irritable bowel or colitis or any one of many digestive disorders, it's more likely to come from the herbicides on the grains not from the protein. That makes a lot of sense because they're poisons. And if glyphosate poisons some living things, it is likely not really good for many others.

Reports are now suggesting that glyphosate might also be responsible for some of the brain function problems like dementia, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

Q Minerals are necessary for proper brain function and glyphosate robs them.

So to me, greens, good oils and proteins are all good. They all contain essential nutrients. There's nothing in

carbohydrates that's essential. Everything in carbs is available in other foods. So I take them off the base of the food pyramid and tell people to limit their intake. If you're physically very active, you can burn quite a bit although if they have glyphosate on them, I wouldn't recommend them at all.

Q Organic is best.

A Well, my view, more and more is for fresh, whole, raw and organic. Tons of vegetables, a little bit of fruit, seeds and nuts. That way, you also get away from the damage done by processing, the nutrients removed by processing, and you get foods more in line with the way nature made it. Health was invented by life in nature. The entire body is made out of air, or oxygen, water and nutrients. There's your food and your food is supposed to be your medicine.

Q When you were very sick, what triggered your quest to uncover the underlining cause of your illness and what inspired you on to begin your research into healthy oils?

A At that point I got mad. I got really ticked off. I had asked the government if they could send me information on pesticide poisoning because that wasn't in my 99.5% exam. Nothing was taught about what to do when you get poisoned, nothing about this stuff is really poisonous so you've got to take care. Nothing like that, it wasn't even in the course. I asked if they could direct me to research because I knew how to look at that and they said they couldn't let me have any of that.

That did it. I went to Greenpeace and met two people there. One was Thelma McAdams and the other person was someone with a French last name who had black hair and had either been poi-



I was very upset and basically wanted to kill something. So I got a job as a pesticide sprayer

soned herself or knew someone close in her family who had been. They had a stack of science research on the effects of pesticide poisoning that was 12-inches thick. When I went through their literature, my palms started to sweat. I found out that half of the pesticides we

sprayed could cause cancer and at that time I didn't know of a cancer cure with a track record. Then I became really focused on nutrition and health. My view is that if the body is made out of oxygen, water and food, when something goes wrong, the first thing you should do is increase the standard you set for what you eat, drink and breathe.

Thelma McAdams told me which supplements to take, in particular antioxidants she thought would be helpful. I ate a lot of raw food and vegetables and



Better known as "Round-Up". I started spraying pesticides in 1976, and Monsanto Round-Up's main active ingredient is glyphosate.

not much meat. I knew of other people who had gotten poisoned by pesticides who did a lot worse than I did. And after two years I recovered. Now at 72, I've had 32 years with a lot of energy. I did a lot of sweating. Everybody knows you can sweat out water soluble toxins through your skin, but the worst toxins are actually oil soluble and the way you sweat those out is by taking really clean – not damaged – oils to literally drive toxins out of your skin.

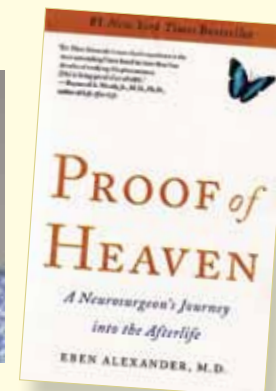
The oil molecules actually like to disperse because they have negative charges which repel each other, so they go in the middle of the stomach, they're absorbed into the body and spread out in all directions. If you take more oil than your body needs, the rest goes out to your skin.

Q The skin needs oil too.

A Yes, and if you get too much, the body actually sweats it out. There's research saying if you get enough, 20% will end up in your skin. If you take more, then more of it will get to our skin. If you sweat the toxins that are oil-soluble, they will end up in the oil part of your sweat. If you do a lot of sweating, your skin will tend to get dry so you take more oil. Oil sweat detox was shown in some research with Agent Orange in 1983.

So I did a lot of *continued p.9...*

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HEALTH



Can slaughter be humane?

I recently received a newsletter advertising local organic food that was subject to "humane slaughtering practices." I find that phrase disturbing. It arises from a mentality or perspective that considers it OK to slaughter another group of sentient beings. Yet the people arranging or financially supporting the slaughter are aware the victims do not choose to be slaughtered and are capable of suffering.

I have seen that phrase used in situations where some prefer the killing to be done with a minimum of fear or pain, such as with pigs. These animals are capable of using computer joysticks (outdoing chimpanzees) and are at least as intelligent as dogs. In an experiment at Penn State University, after one year, the dog hadn't developed the capability equal to that of a pig. Pigs have been known to save children's lives and play video games. Enjoy a six-minute video by Wendy Webster at www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpzpUeJ9HA8

Those calling themselves animal lovers would never dream of treating their pets the way farm animals are treated. Male calves, destined to become veal, endure brief lifetimes of solitary confinement in tiny areas so their muscles do not toughen before slaughter. (www.sPCA.bc.ca/assets/documents/welfare/farm/farmsense/june-2012-feature-story.pdf)

**Animal lovers would never dream of treating their
pets the way farm animals are treated.**

By watching television programs, chickens can learn to determine which bowls will deliver food, yet they are denied opportunities for normal behaviours, such as pecking in the dirt or raising their young. Overcrowding occurs to a degree that they are unable to raise their wings; some go mad and peck their cage mates to death. "Free run" chickens are housed in barns (not outdoors) and "free range" chickens have at least some access to the outdoors, but even these labels are not regulated or verified by third party inspectors so actual conditions can vary. For eggs to be certified organic, the chickens must have at least 16 inches by 16 inches of living space. Organic or not, after the egg-layer is "spent," she is strung up by her feet and sent down the line. Back in the days when one could enter a slaughterhouse and observe conditions, I was told by a Vancouver worker that "organic" chickens went down the same line and fell into what this worker described as a fecal soup (www.earthsave.org/health/what_about_chicken.htm).

One can ask for better conditions for animals during their lives, including during transport or at time of slaughter. Some organizations are advocating for animals in this way. See www.choosecagefree.ca and www.cetfa.org But why not go one step further? We have no need to eat these animals. We know that red meat is linked to increased risk of colon cancer and other cancer, chicken is a major source of pathogenic bacteria and other unwelcome components and that animals about to be butchered are frightened and often undergo prolonged suffering. When we buy meat, we financially support slaughter.

Tasty as animal products can be, there are now excellent meat alternatives (try Gardein's Golden Fishless Fillets and Szechuan Beefless Strips). Explore natural foods markets for many new products. Whole plant foods are superbly healthy; we get abundant protein from legumes, grains and vegetables. Check out www.happycow.net, www.veg dining.com, www.meetup.com (type in "vegan") and www.veg festvancouver.com

Delicious food and compassion can go hand in hand. ☐

Vesanto's **Becoming Vegan: Express Edition** with Brenda Davis is winner of the 2014 Canada Book Award, finalist for book of the year and the "go-to book" on vegan nutrition as designated by the American Library Association. See **Cooking Vegetarian** (co-authored with Joseph Forest, Harper Collins, 2011). www.nutrispeak.com, www.becomingvegan.ca

GMO Bites

Tell Starbucks to support organics and stop fighting GMO labelling

Starbucks is serving milk to millions of customers every day from factory farms along with baked good products chock full of GMOs. As if that weren't bad enough, as a dues paying member of the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), Starbucks has helped lead the charge in fighting against common sense GMO labelling in the US.

In the past two years alone, Starbucks has been a part of a GMA-led coalition that has donated more than \$70 million dollars to defeat GMO labelling efforts in California and Washington State. By opposing GMO labelling, Starbucks has willingly climbed in bed with Monsanto and the GMA and is intentionally misleading customers about their commitment to "sustainability" and "ethical sourcing."

Tell Starbucks to stop fighting against GMO labelling and commit to serving the most sustainable dairy option – organic milk – at all of its locations. Every voice counts. Sign the petition at fooddemocracynow.org

Don't let the USDA destroy organics

One of the biggest assaults on the integrity of organic foods is taking place at the USDA that has ever been conceived. High-level political appointees are working behind the scenes with giant industrial corporations that sell organic product lines to gut 20 years of precedent in the congressionally mandated National Organic Standards Board (NOSB).

USDA representative Miles McEvoy has illegally taken over the meeting by appointing himself as meeting "co-chair" in an effort to erode the authority of and control the decisions made by allegedly independent NOSB members as spelled out in the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990.


At stake here is the neutering of an independent NOSB decision-making process and the deliberate destruction of organic integrity by allowing synthetic ingredients to

be permanently allowed in organic foods due to pressure from giant corporate organic interests. This is an outrageous power grab to destroy organics and it must be stopped. Sign the petition at fooddemocracynow.org

Stop Monsanto's GMOs from contaminating organics

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is working with biotech lobbyists to finalize a plan so Monsanto's GMO crops can contaminate organic and non-GMO farmers crops at will. The USDA's new plan could force these farmers to pay for crop "contamination" insurance to protect themselves against unwanted contamination by Monsanto's patented genetically engineered genes.

When Monsanto says "coexistence," what they really mean is, "We will contaminate organics." Despite claims by Monsanto and the USDA, nobody can overrule the laws of biology and dictate how plants reproduce. Patented GMO pollen is spread by wind, insects, birds and animals and no matter how much Monsanto denies it, their GMO crops will contaminate and destroy the integrity of farmers' organic and non-GMO crops.

If the USDA's new AC21 guidelines are adopted, organic farmers may lose the right to sue Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta and the biotech bullies for economic losses resulting from GMO contamination of their organic crops. Please stand to protect the rights of organic farmers everywhere. Sign the petition at fooddemocracynow.org 

Food Democracy Now! is a grassroots movement of more than 650,000 farmers and citizens dedicated to building a sustainable food system that protects our natural environment, sustains farmers and nourishes families. A few companies dominate the market, prioritizing profits over people and our planet. Government policies put the interests of corporate agribusiness over the livelihoods of farm families. Food Democracy Now! members organize both through online campaigns and in-person actions. We invite you to join us at fooddemocracynow.org

...*Udo from p.7*

sweating because if you drive toxins through your liver or kidneys, you can damage those organs. The safest way to get rid of these toxins is to sweat them out. The worst thing that will happen is you'll get a rash on your skin as the poisons leave. That rash goes away within two to six weeks.

Then I really started paying attention to my diet,



The safest way to get rid of these toxins is to sweat them out.

switched to organic and started taking supplements. After about two years, I got my energy back. A long time. Out of the research I did on nutrition and health and disease, I came across information that was published about edible oils: what happens when they're made, how they're made and the damage done to the oil molecules. The colourless, tasteless oils you find everywhere on the shelves of regular stores are treated with sodium hydroxide, which we also know as Drano. Then they're treated with phosphoric acid, which is used commercially for degreasing windows. It's a very corrosive acid.

Then they treat it with bleaching clays and the oil goes rancid. Not only does it smell bad, it tastes bad. They heat it to frying temperature, sometimes as

high as 245 degrees Celsius, which is the high end of frying – the lowest is 160 – and damage is done to the molecules exponentially with the increase in temperature. By the time all that's done, you have a colourless, odourless, tasteless oil. You can't tell what organism it has come from because the taste is gone. It has a long shelf life, but about one percent of the molecules are damaged. They're changed from something natural that life made a breakdown program for to something that never existed in nature and therefore life very likely did not make a breakdown program for. When you put those oils in your body, after five, 10 or 20 years, you have enough toxic molecules in your body to interfere with health. The immune system doesn't know how to break them down. Life never made a program for that so they tend to accumulate, which is why we've been told industrial and environmental poisons accumulate with age. They just pile up. You're getting them in faster than your body can get rid of them.

When I realized there's one percent damage from the manufacturing process, I called the American Oil Chemists Society. I talked to one of their research scientists and asked, "Given this processing you do with oils does damage to the oil, why do you do that?"

He said, "One reason is that when we treat the oil that way, we can get rid of about half of the pesticides in the oil." I was thinking the other 50% stays in? So the obvious question was "Why don't you start with organic seeds that have no pesticides on them?" There

was a long, really long, silence at the other end of the phone. I just waited. Then he got mad. He said, "I don't know what your problem is. The oil's only one percent damaged. It's still 99% good and if you got 99% on an exam, you'd be damn happy, wouldn't you?" Of course I got 99.5 so I wasn't that impressed, but I backed off and thought "Okay, only one percent, maybe I'm over-reacting."

Then I did the math. The question was how many damaged molecules you will find in a tablespoon of oil if that oil is one percent damaged by the process? The number is 1.5 million damaged molecules for every one of the body's 60 trillion cells. That's how many damaged molecules you get into your body with every tablespoon. We use two to four tablespoons or double that each day on average, for many years.

When I realized this, a million and a half damaged molecules for every one of my body's 60 trillion cells, I said, "I can't get healthy like this." And that was correlated with more inflammation and more cancer. Causal, didn't know that for sure, but correlated, which was a pretty good hint.

Oils are the most sensitive molecules of all of our nutrition molecules so they should be treated with the utmost care, but they're actually treated with the least.

At that point, I decided we should make them with health in mind, not just for shelf life. I complained about what they weren't doing until my sister said she agreed but I just made everybody feel bad because I was only complaining and nothing was *continued p.23...*



Censorship in Lipid Land

Stories from Australia and Britain reveal the dangers of telling the truth about statins

When policy dooms you, start telling stories – stories so fabulous, so gripping, so spellbinding that the king forgets all about a lethal policy. Karl Rove (one of George W. Bush's advisors)

Welcome to Lipid Land, ruled by our old friends Scandal, Deception and Deceit. After last month, it's time to add Censorship to the list.

If you think this subject doesn't affect you, think again. With one in five Canadians swallowing a daily cholesterol-lowering drug, or statin – which leaps to 50% of Canadians over 65 – and all of us consuming media about pharmaceuticals, this is a vital issue, even beyond the massive prescribing of drugs like Lipitor, Zocor or Crestor.

Many of my voyages into the absurdities of Lipid Land over the last decade have delivered stories of intrigue and scandal, yet I have to admit things have never been this weird. Statin fanaticism seems to have so clouded medicine's thinking that now even some of the most cherished tenets of medicine – i.e. "First, let's try not to kill the patient" – seem quaint and outdated. The motto "He who dies with the lowest cholesterol wins" pretty much captures the immense hubris around using chemicals to tweak a substance essential to our health.

Two stories from the UK and Australia in the last month have confirmed the arguments around statin drugs – their benefits and harms – have become completely unanchored from reality and are threatening to sink in a sea of propaganda.

There are three generally irrefutable points you can summarize from the research on the effectiveness and safety of statins: 1.) statins 'work' primarily for a small subset of men who have heart disease; 2.) most people currently prescribed statins are unlikely to see any net health benefit; and 3.) all statin takers expose themselves to risks of harm. When I say 'work,' I don't mean lowering your cholesterol, I mean preventing a heart attack or stroke. The only ones who benefit from the drugs are men who have had heart disease or previously had a heart attack. They may see a 4-5% reduced risk of a heart attack or stroke over five years by swallowing a daily statin. There is a lack of evidence showing women, the elderly and 'low risk' men (i.e. most of us) will benefit from statins. What is disputable is the rate at which statin swallows are harmed. The big manufacturer-funded statin trials show a very small level of adverse effects, yet other case studies or observational studies note perhaps as many as one in five statin users will experience adverse effects.

Last year, one of the most prestigious medical journals in the world, the British Medical Journal (BMJ), weighed into this controversy by publishing a report that said there is no benefit of taking statins for people who have a less than 20% risk of a heart attack over the next 10 years. It also said that, from observational studies of statins, about 18-20% of patients don't tolerate the drug due to side effects. Those effects can include fatigue, muscle aches and pain, stomach complaints, short-term memory loss and erectile dysfunction, among other things.

A large, influential group in the UK – the Cholesterol Treatment Trialists' Collaboration (CTT) – soaks in millions of pounds of drug money and emits some of the most egregious pro-statin propaganda on the planet. The head of the CTT, Sir Rory Collins at Oxford, was obviously outraged by the BMJ's piece and in media interviews, including the UK's Guardian, accused the BMJ report of killing people. He then went on to brow-beat the BMJ's editor Fiona Godlee saying the BMJ got it wrong and the side effects weren't 18-20%; they were less. The BMJ published a correction, indicating the true number might only be "9% of the study population having possibly discontinued statin therapy as a consequence of statin related events, rather than the 18% cited."

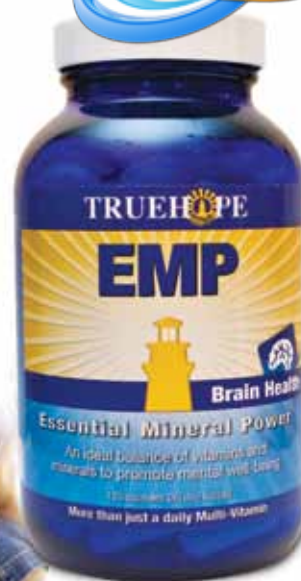
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End of story, right? Not quite. Seems the BMJ correction didn't exactly satisfy the CTT people and Collins next asked the BMJ to retract the article saying patients would be scared off their valuable statins unless the BMJ relented.

This is medical-academic bullying of the finest kind. Some observers say the whole fiasco is a smokescreen put up by statin manufacturers and their agents who are known to hide statin adverse events data while insisting the drugs are safe enough to be added to the drinking water. Godlee has sent the issue to an independent panel, but the whole thing stinks to high heaven. The most awful stench is the rot of censorship where the manufacturers want to protect the image of cholesterol-lowering drugs and do so by attacking the integrity and independence of a medical journal. Stay tuned on this one.

The second tale from Lipid Land concerns an investigative report produced by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Journalist Maryanne Demasi's two-part investigative program, *The Heart of the Matter*, was part of ABC's Catalyst program examining the health effects of diets (part 1) and statin drugs (part 2). (Go to www.youtube.com and search for *Heart of the Matter*, *The Cholesterol Myth*, Part 2.)

This two-part series was dynamite, probably one of the hardest hitting programs you're likely to see on statins anywhere. Demasi interviewed a wide range of researchers and physicians, including some desperate defenders of the statin hypotheses and prominent non-conflicted statin researchers Drs. John Abramson, Rita Redberg and Beatrice Golomb. Uffe Ravnskov, a prominent cholesterol scientist from Denmark, has covered the misinterpretations and exaggerations around cholesterol for decades. He said, "As far as I know, this is the first TV program in the western world where critics of the cholesterol campaign have been allowed to present their view in detail."

Instead of kudos for Demasi and her team, Australia's National Heart Foundation and the drug companies immediately began their attack, forcing the ABC to convene their "Audience and Consumer Affairs" group to examine the critical comments. The 49-page judgment on the Catalyst program says the program generally did a very balanced job and 10 of 11 critical points were cleared of bias. Apparently, one part offended the sensibilities of the reviewers with the conclusion: "The program could have done a better job of teasing out the mainstream perspective to leave audiences better informed." What the heck does that mean? We're not sure.

The Director of Australia's National Heart Foundation, an organization which lives off the avails of drug companies, came to defend statins by repeating the usual canard: "Statins reduce the risk of death or cardiovascular events in populations without a history of cardiovascular disease, irrespective of age and gender and across a wide range of cholesterol levels."

Despite the program showing vital evidence of the very minor effects of statins for most people and the lack of any lifesaving benefit in women or in those without established heart disease, as well as an indeterminate number who suffer adverse events from the drug, guess what happened? ABC pulled the *Heart of the Matter* series off the air. Jaws were heard dropping around the world.

Statin fanaticism seems to have so clouded medicine's thinking that now even some of the most cherished tenets of medicine – i.e., "First, let's try not to kill the patient" – seem quaint and outdated.

In the end, I'm fearful these kinds of bully tactics don't just affect the officials at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation or the British Medical Journal; they also affect all journalists worldwide who we expect to expose these sorts of controversies so consumers can make informed healthcare decisions. Will these two episodes usher in a new era of self-censorship as future problems with pharmaceuticals are avoided by serious journalists or obscured or manipulated by the manufacturers and their sycophants?

I have to give the last word to French cardiologist and researcher Michel de Lorgier. In his book, *Cholesterol and Statins: Sham Science and Bad Medicine*, he asks, "Why does challenging the cholesterol theory trigger such extreme reactions?" And further, "Why are the media afraid of revealing the greatest medical scandal in modern time?" All I can add is "Why indeed?"

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria and the author of three books, each of which contain chapters on cholesterol-lowering.

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Left Coast Naturals aims to be GMO free

BC-based company the first distributor in North America to take this step

Left Coast Naturals, a BC-based natural foods manufacturer and distributor representing nearly 30 brands, 200 bulk foods and three house brands (Hippie Foods, Skeet & Ike's and Left Coast Bulk Foods), is taking the industry lead in ensuring its entire catalogue will be free from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) by December 31, 2015. Through the development of its policy and implementation plan, and with guidance from the Non-GMO Project Standard, Left Coast Naturals will vet and phase out any items that contain GMOs by the deadline.

The Burnaby-based company has a nationwide reach and a track record as a trailblazer in sustainability and environmental issues. "We feel this is the direction in which our industry needs to go – in which we *all* need to go. Someone had to step up first – why not us?" says Ian Walker, President of Left Coast Naturals. "Our products are all about staying true to the way nature made them. GMOs stand for the opposite. This is something we will not support."

Nature's Path, another BC-based, sustainable food company, has played a strong advocacy role on the Non-GMO front and congratulates Left Coast Naturals for taking a stand. "As a local, organic food company committed to the Non-GMO movement, we're thrilled to see our

friends at Left Coast Naturals show such dedication to keeping GMOs out of our food supply," says Arjan Stephens, Executive VP of Sales and Marketing at Nature's Path. "It's proactive policies like these and the actions of conscious consumers that are making BC a hotbed for growing transparency in the nation's food system."


Our products are all about staying true to the way nature made them. GMOs stand for the opposite. This is something we will not support. – Ian Walker

For over 15 years, Left Coast Naturals has asked its vendors to provide letters confirming non-GMO status. Today, as more commercial crops are being genetically modified and public concern about GMO issues grows, the company finds that new tools, including third party verification and lab testing, can offer definitive confirmation of non-GMO status. Left Coast Naturals recognizes it's now possible to offer a deeper level of transparency to its customers and more accurately follow the

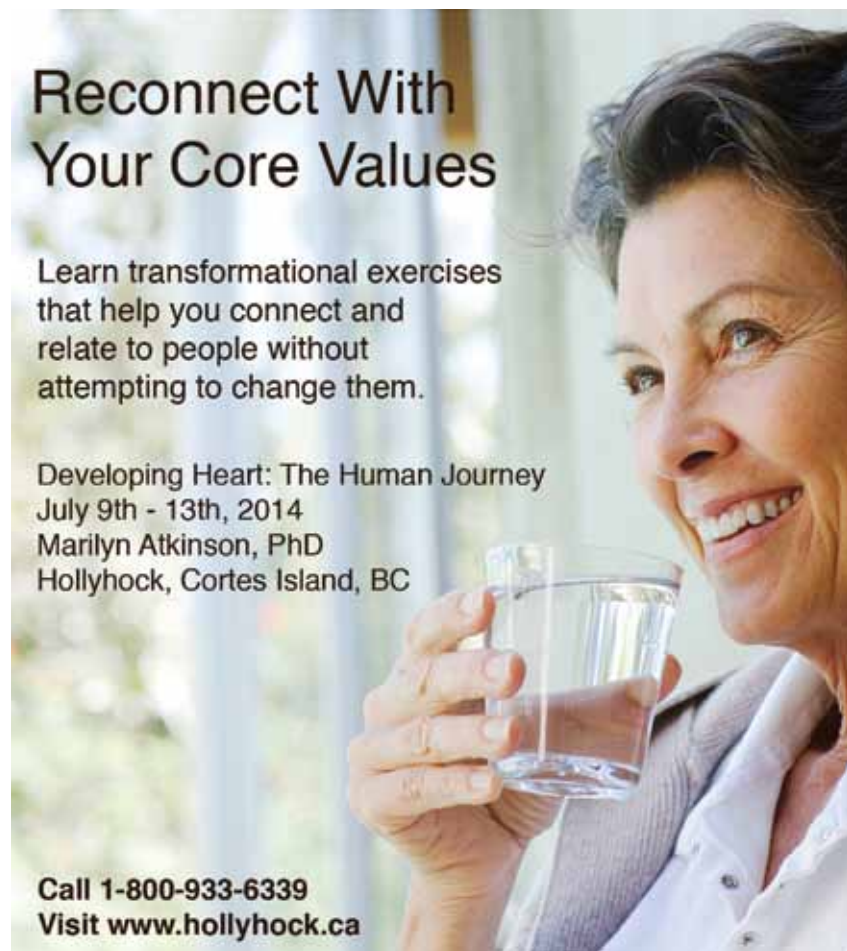
company's position on avoiding GMO ingredients.

Effective immediately, all *new* products developed by Left Coast Naturals, or brought into its distribution service, will need to prove their non-GMO status. For items already being distributed by Left Coast Naturals, strict timelines have been set for weeding out GMOs from both its bulk foods and packaged grocery catalogues. Certified Organic items will be given special consideration, as Certified Organic standards do not permit the use of GMO inputs. Left Coast Naturals will work with current vendors whose products include suspected GMO ingredients to develop a plan for transitioning to non-GMO ingredients by the 2015 deadline.

All in-house products will be 100% non-GMO by December, 2014. As a further level of vigilance, any house brand product with ingredients deemed "high risk" of containing GMOs, e.g. corn or canola, will be verified by the Non-GMO Project, regardless of their Certified Organic status.

Left Coast Naturals will publish progress reports in July 2014 and December 2014 to share learnings and update their progress by category. 

For more information on the Non-GMO Project, visit: nongmoproject.org/learn-more, nongmoproject.org/press/news




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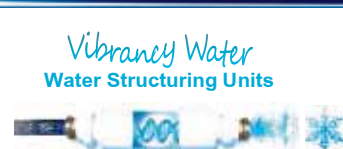
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NEB public consult a public insult

By Reimar Kroeher

Common Ground asked Reimar Kroeher to study the highly controversial documents and share his analysis with our readers. Kroeher holds Economics degrees from UBC and UCLA and he was an Economics instructor at Langara for over 30 years.

In December 2013, just before Christmas, the National Energy Board (NEB) declared the Northern Gateway pipelines to be in Canada's public interest. It accepted all of Enbridge's claims of benefits and rejected the submissions of hundreds of citizens, public interest groups and first nations. The lesson to be learned from these hearings is that the NEB is unwilling or unable to conduct a set of unbiased hearings.

The NEB will be at it again – holding hearings to determine if the Kinder Morgan pipeline will be in Canada's public interest. This time, the hearings will be even more biased. To begin with, the panel rejected some 485 applicants because, in its opinion, they: a) "will not be directly affected" b) "do not have special expertise" c) "want to discuss global warming." In addition, the panel downgraded some 1,200 applicants to "commenter" status. Commenters are allowed to put in written submissions, but not allowed to ask questions or have face-to-face contact with the panel. Whether anybody ever reads these



... these pipelines will bring about substantial increases of in the price of gasoline and diesel in Western Canada NEB panels have never yet rejected a single pipeline application

"comments" is anybody's guess. Even the mighty US Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, has been reduced to commenter status! Conveniently, this allows the panel to avoid having to answer tough questions from EPA experts. Fewer than 20% of the applicants were granted "intervener" status. Only interveners are granted face-to-face contact with the panel and allowed to challenge the claims made by Kinder Morgan.

Knowing what occurred during the Gateway hearings, we should have no illusions about the final outcome of the Kinder Morgan hearings. The results are predictable. NEB panels have never yet rejected a single pipeline application. According to NEB, all pipelines are in the public interest. This panel has been given its mandate by its masters in Calgary and Ottawa. Opponents of pipelines are "enemies of Canada." No matter how well prepared the interveners, no matter how compelling their arguments, no matter how many holes they can poke into Kinder Morgan's claims, the panel will declare the pipeline in the public interest. In its cost benefit analysis, the panel will likely use the same biased procedure noted below:

Include the extra jobs created by the construction and operation of the pipeline as well as jobs created by tar sand expansion, but only show the cost of constructing the pipeline. In other words, upstream benefits will be counted, but upstream cost will not.

Accept all claims, facts and figures submitted by Kinder Morgan at face value and not subject them to independent peer review.

Accept the myth that, after a spill, effective clean-up is

continued p.29...

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Junking down our food supply

Dr. Thierry Vrain

Dr. Thierry Vrain, a former soil biologist and genetic scientist, worked for Agriculture Canada for 30 years. He was the designated spokesperson to assure the public of the safety of GMO crops. Since retiring 10 years ago from Agriculture Canada, Dr. Vrain now warns of the dangers of GMOs.

Sunday June 8, 1pm

Dr. Thierry Vrain gives a talk on “The Gene Revolution” at Vancouver’s Everything Vegan & Vegetarian Expo at Canada Place in Vancouver. Tickets & info at www.vegexpo.ca



herbicide by a bigger chemical corporation named Monsanto. The 70’s were the years of my graduate work in North Carolina and I remember RoundUp being touted as the new wonder herbicide. Allegedly, it was non-toxic to animals, had no effect on the environment and biodegraded rapidly. It was a really effective weed killer that grew very popular very fast.

Starting with the first two engineered crops, corn and soybean, engineered to survive being doused with the weed killer, the spread of the technology since 1996 has been nothing but revolutionary. This is seen as

It is high time to change the debate from the safety of engineering food to the pesticides that are inside the food. The technology is essentially about spraying a weed killer on the crops and the herbicide RoundUp is an integral part of the technology – the engineered crops are called RoundUp Ready. Farmers everywhere have been assured complete safety, higher yields and savings of herbicide. When these promises don’t quite pan out, the farmers don’t have much of an opportunity to do something different. It turns out the technology has been incredibly successful, so much so that there is not much of a market for non-engineered seeds now. Monsanto has a monopoly and has cornered the seed supply of much of the planet.

Since all engineered foods come from crops sprayed with RoundUp, they all contain residues of RoundUp. And it turns out other crops are also sprayed with this herbicide, but much later, just before harvest, because it kills the plants and they are dried fast to make harvesting easier for the farmers. This is commonly done with sugar cane, beans, grains, potatoes and many other crops. I usually say in my lectures that if you want to avoid any residue of RoundUp herbicide in your food, go organic. That is the only choice.

A bit of history to show why RoundUp should be avoided: in the early 60’s, a small chemical company was testing new molecules that could be used to clean industrial pipes and boilers of mineral deposits – just like the kettle in your home that makes mineral deposits after a few months or years. In 1964, the company, called Stauffer Chemicals, patented their best molecule. It was named glyphosate and described as a strong and very broad spectrum descaling agent. A descaling agent is a chelator in chemistry and biology lingo. A chelator is a molecule that can grab onto and hold metal ions.

Within a few years, the descaling agent was also found to kill plants very effectively. It was then bought and patented in 1969 as an exceptionally broad spectrum

high-tech agriculture – a gene revolution after the green revolution. In 2013, there were about 500-million acres of engineered crops and 90% of them were doused liberally with close to two billion pounds of glyphosate. The molecule is so ubiquitous, it is now found in our food, our drinking water, the rain and most importantly, in our bodies.

Glyphosate (GMO herbicide) was also patented as an antibiotic in 2010 by Monsanto... The patent contains a very long list of bacteria killed by this chemical... and indeed it damages the microbiome of animals.

Life is movement and movement is an activity that only one kind of molecule can perform in living cells. Proteins are the only molecules that can move. Their movement relies on metal ions that are an integral part of the protein molecules. Proteins with metal ions are called metallo-proteins, also known as enzymes. All enzymes of all living cells rely on their metal cofactors for proper function. If the metal ions are not available, the protein molecules cannot function, the cells malfunction, the organs slow down and show disease symptoms.


So in one corner we have all living cells – which include bacteria, fungi, plants and animals – that must find metal micronutrients in their food to have

a normal function. And in the other corner we have nearly two billion pounds of a chemical that functions by grabbing onto metal ions and holding on – making them bio-unavailable. If you find the imagery disturbing, read on. In 2010, glyphosate was also patented as an antibiotic by Monsanto. Obviously, the plan was to use it in hospitals and pharmacies. The patent contains a very long list of bacteria killed by this chemical; this is a very broad spectrum antibiotic and indeed damages the microbiome of animals. It does not affect many human pathogenic bacteria, but it certainly kills a lot of bacteria.



The microbiome is like a second brain, that is how important it is.

In case you did not notice that word, microbiome, I will say a few words about this organ. It turns out all animals – even the bees – are symbiotic organisms with thousands of species of bacteria in their digestive system. We humans have about one hundred trillion bacteria in our intestine. Aside from riding with us and getting fed, this complex bacterial community actually controls many of our organs. Our immune system, our brain and many other organs are completely “influenced” (if you do not like the word control). We humans may think we are on top, but we are in a very dependent and symbiotic relationship with these bacteria. Firstly, they make most of the serotonin in your body. A small malfunction and a small decrease in serotonin and you are depressed. They make most of the other neurotransmitters too and your vitamins and half of the building blocks of your own proteins – too complex for your bodies to make. The microbiome is like a second brain. That is how important it is.

When you eat engineered food – by definition, depleted of metal micronutrients because it contains residues of a strong chelator – your microbiome and your intestine are, of course, first in line. After a few years of eating depleted food, other organs start to show symptoms. This is shown in the statistics of both the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta Georgia and the US Department of Agriculture, put together by Dr. Nancy Swanson for the US. I wish somebody would do the same compilation in Canada. The statistics show a very probable link between the amount of glyphosate sprayed on crops and the number of people coming down with gastrointestinal problems, kidney inflammation, liver damage and a host of other degenerative (read inflammation) diseases. These are very similar to the symptoms we have seen for the last 10 years in published studies of rats fed engineered food. Calorie rich and nutrient depleted, isn’t that the definition of junk food? 

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For some folks, music festivals are all about getting wasted. But for more and more of us – along with a growing number of festival organizers – music fests focus on getting un-wasted: retreating into spectacular sites and participating in safe, environmentally friendly, diverse, full-blown, family-friendly celebrations of community.

Since performance began to outstrip recordings as a source of revenue, corporations have jumped on the bandwagon, with both hands. Festivals are an industry, big-time, but, increasingly, music fests aren't being created merely for profit. They now include slow, healthy food, communing with nature and sharing much more than the attractions on the main menu – the cornucopia of live music that highlights the year on many calendars, often providing a once-in-a-lifetime memory.

The secret is to design your own festival experience. In BC, we are truly blessed; there's something for everyone and more than enough to go around. A great place to start is the free, aptly named *2014 Ultimate Summer Festival Guide*, a labour of love published by *BC Musician Magazine*. Virtually everyone could quite literally plan summer around the encyclopedic chronology, descriptions, websites and maps that stretch to Saskatchewan.

"We have more than 450 festivals on our database, ranging in price from free to hundreds of dollars," reports editor Sarah Fahey. "It's an enormous task, a work in progress, keeping track of new and cancelled events for our sixth annual edition. Something I've noticed is that more yoga, art and other components are now overlapping and complementing the music."

Only 15,000 copies of the must-have guide are printed. Visit www.bcmusician.com for more information, including 350 places where you can pick up a copy.

Location, we're told, is everything. And some folks got it right from the get-go. Since 1978, the Vancouver Folk Music Festival has held its own as one of the best outdoor concerts on the continent – three days and more than 70 hours of world, folk and roots music on myriad outdoor stages. Postcard perfect Jericho Beach Park is the ongoing headliner that keeps people coming back. So are Whales Tails and other treats, annual rituals for generations in the Festival's food area, which is evolving into a mirror of the world music on-stage, feeding the increasingly acquired insatiable taste for food from trucks and street vendors served up on compostable plates.

"We are very sensitive to the park," says artistic director Linda Tanaka. "The VFMF pioneered on-site recycling, something that's been studied by other

festivals and communities. We have 80 volunteers on our recycling team, encourage people to take transit, provide a monitored space for 500 bicycles and conduct tours by First Nations of the site's plant and wildlife." Linda also answered a question many of us want to ask, "How did another attraction – the vendors – appear on the beach?"

"We call it the Folk Bazaar," Tanaka says. "Several years ago, the City asked us to organize and oversee the vendors



Festivals are an industry, big-time, but, increasingly, music fests aren't being created merely for profit. They now include slow, healthy food, communing with nature and sharing much more than the attractions on the main menu.

who show up every year. They are now part of the festival and free of charge, 160 in all. We get applications from travellers in India, Thailand and other countries around the world, as well as local entrepreneurs. Canadian artisans are featured inside the fenced area."

The VFMF runs July 18-20. Visit festival.bc.ca for more information on this year's musical line-up. And while you're online, check out www.island-folkfestival.ca to learn more about a smaller scale, first-rate festival experience hosted the same weekend.

For 30 years and counting, the Cowichan Folk Guild has been staging the iconic Islands Folk Festival in Duncan at the historic, yet innovative, Providence Farm, which is

celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. The 400-acre working organic community enterprise has a guiding principle that “caring for the land together is by nature healing and therapeutic.”

New artistic director Bobbie Blue brings years of experience from the Filberg Festival, another event that benefits from a unique setting. (Filberg runs August 1-4 in Comox.) Blue says, “No big changes. We just want to get better, not bigger, a community festival for music lovers and their families. Our strength lies in our size. We only sell 2,000 weekend passes and people who purchase one become a member of our family for the weekend.”

Of all the artistic directors *Common Ground* interviewed, Doug Cox articulated one important point most succinctly and forcibly. “Studies show that festival fans are event goers, not concert goers. Rule number one: no assholes in the audience or on-stage. Anyone misbehaving is dealt with immediately.”

A touring musician, Cox, like other artistic directors, scours the world to discover and book artists whose work he wants to share back home on the Comox

Fairground July 11-13. (www.islandmusicfest.com) He is also well aware of 20 years of history, the importance of 1,300 keen volunteers, the river and Farmer’s Market nearby and the fact that extended families book the same site in the camp-

ences actually create the festival culture themselves – generations of extended families, friends re-uniting, bankers chatting with bikers and welcome newcomers.”

Festivals bring out the best in us;



ground that sells out every year, before the lineup is rolled out.

“It’s a thrill to see an audience enjoy and discover the live music,” Cox says. “Often, without realizing it, the audi-

imagine a world that lived in the same spirit off-site. For example, Country Celebration, a 36-year-old farm folk festival in Langley (September 13-14) has reduced and diverted 93% of waste

from landfills. Another gem I discovered in the *2014 Ultimate Summer Festival Guide* is the Tiny Lights Festival in Ymir, July 13-15, (www.tinylights-festival.com) The small community on Highway 6, between Nelson and Salmo, boasted 11 hotels in the 1890s. Music, spoken word, theatre, art, dance and film are now presented in six historic venues including a bike-powered stage!

Organizers say, “Our festival is the core of a larger philosophy. We want to provide an event that brings together our community to appreciate and learn about performing arts, practical arts and sustainability. Our main focus is community engagement and benefit. We engage all ages in our festival, educating about our past and learning from our youth.”

There’s a lifetime’s worth of live music being staged this summer. Check out websites with family and friends. Design your own festival experience. Engaging in community and celebrating the Commons deserves a standing ovation, along with the music. **K**

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of *Our Clinic*. brucemason@shaw.ca



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LETTERS

Farewell Farley

Farley Mowat died on May 7, 2014, at the age of 92. He was one of a kind and his writing and life were infused with humour and a genuine love and respect for all living things – except for the humans who are ruining the planet for everybody else.

His views on nuclear power and nuclear weapons were entirely consistent with his views on everything else.

The infinite stupidity of building arsenals of “weapons” whose use would reverse the accomplishments of four billion years of evolution of life on Earth and of mass producing indestructible, highly toxic radioactive waste byproducts that will probably outlast the human race – especially if we keep on going the way we are going – staggers the imagination.

Rest in peace Farley.

– Gordon Edwards, president, Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, www.ccnr.org

We are transforming the Palm Oil industry

In March, we released our report, *Donuts, Deodorant, Deforestation: Scoring America's Top Brands on Their Palm Oil Commitments*. Our scorecard showed that a new standard for responsible palm oil – one that protects tropical forests and our climate – has emerged. There's no excuse for corporate America to continue buying palm oil that causes climate change, loss of endangered species habitat and tropical deforestation.

More than 63,000 people sent emails to six of America's biggest companies – including Colgate-Palmolive, General Mills, Procter & Gamble, PepsiCo, McDonald's, and Dunkin' Brands – asking them to go deforestation-free.

It's working! Three companies – Colgate-Palmolive, General Mills and Procter & Gamble – have announced new palm oil commitments that protect all forests and all carbon-rich peatlands. This is a tremendous step forward for the climate, tropical forests and endangered species and we couldn't do it without you.

Together, we are transforming the palm oil industry. Join the more than 63,000 people who have asked America's biggest companies to go deforestation-free. Tell Dunkin' Brands, McDonald's and PepsiCo that now is the time to adopt strong deforestation-free and peat-free palm oil policies. Visit www.ucsusa.org/action Click on Take Action at the top and then click on “Tell America's biggest brands to use deforestation-free palm oil.”

The Union of Concerned Scientists puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet's most pressing problems. We combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe and sustainable future.

– Sharon Smith, Campaign Manager, Tropical Forest & Climate Initiative, Union of Concerned Scientists, www.ucsusa.org

Vancouver should deal with its own waste

The corporations that want to build an incinerator in Nanaimo to burn Vancouver's garbage have filled whole pages of our newspapers without printing anything that could help us make an informed decision.

How much ash is left from the burn? Which chemicals does it consist of? Which watershed will it be dumped in or are they planning on dumping it in the ocean?

Of that dumped in the airshed, which chemicals are they? How large are the particles, especially the metals, and which polymers and benzene chains can we expect? And how much will there be?

They haven't even provided a cost-benefit study as to how much power is generated after the amount used in the burning process is deducted along with the wages, infrastructure costs, transport and bonding for cleanup if a barge flips in our estuary. Wheelabrator, Urbaser and Seaspin should quit whining and Vancouver should deal with its own waste.

– Jim Erkiletian, Nanaimo



Salmon farms: a decade of problems

The David Suzuki Foundation and others have run ads over the past decade decrying BC's open net-cage salmon farm industry. With significant expansion planned for the West Coast, the question remains, "Has BC's salmon farm industry improved?"

Salmon farming threatens some of the planet's last remaining viable wild salmon – a keystone species that touches all our coastal ecosystems. The issues in dispute include feed ingredients, disease transmission between farms and wild salmon, bird and marine mammal deaths, pesticide and antibiotic use and the effects of multiple farms in concentrated areas.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program recently released science-based ranking reports on open net-cage farmed salmon in BC, Norway, Chile and Scotland. All received a "red" or "avoid buying" designation. Canada's SeaChoice followed suit.

More than 90% of migrating juvenile salmon die before returning to freshwater to spawn, most in the first months after entering the ocean. Pathogens may be a significant factor, although not all specifics about diseases are fully known. Justice Bruce Cohen's Commission of Inquiry investigating the decline of Fraser River sockeye included pathogen risk... as a factor in the 2009 sockeye collapse. Disease from salmon farms is one risk to wild salmon that can be controlled.

Salmon farming shouldn't be done at the expense of wild salmon. Both wild and farmed-salmon industries provide fish and create economic activity, but the province's sports and commercial wild salmon fisheries and marine tourism contribute more to BC's economy and quality of life than salmon farming.


Aquaculture must stop using the ocean as a free waste-treatment system. Closed-containment – in the ocean or on land – is better at controlling water and removing feces and chemicals like antibiotics and pesticides used for sea lice. One BC open net-cage

company lost over \$200 million in one year because of disease, enough to build 10 closed-containment farms. Yet the industry claims closed alternatives cost too much.

Although the salmon farm industry has decreased pesticide use, improved parasite management and reduced feed waste and wild fish used for feed, it hasn't eliminated the problems. Despite the risks, last year the federal government quietly opened the door to expand BC's aquaculture industry. Thirteen applications for new or larger farms along the coast have been submitted.

As Justice Cohen said, more federal research into the effects of fish farms on wild salmon stocks is critical... A promising partnership between Genome British Columbia, the Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to discover the microbes that may cause disease in BC's wild salmon and hinder their ability to reproduce could provide answers. But those answers don't yet exist.

The fish farming industry is making efforts. In 2013, a farm in Norway was the first to be certified by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council. Closed-containment systems, which have fewer impacts on the environment and wild fish, are also growing. The Namgis First Nation on northeastern Vancouver Island recently started shipping its first closed-containment "Kuterra" Atlantic salmon to Safeway stores in BC and Alberta. The aquaculture industry could also improve environmental performance by producing food such as scallops, mussels, tilapia and seaweed that are a lower risk to the environment and use less feed and chemicals.

Unless we chart a sound course, salmon will lose – but so will we and the bears, eagles and magnificent coastal forests that support so much life. 

With contributions from David Suzuki Foundation BC and Western Region director-general Jay Ritchlin. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org



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THE SUN'S passage through the sign of Gemini usually hints at a lively and active time of the year. Gemini is ruled by Mercury, the god of business, trade and communication. He also rules short journeys, contracts and negotiations. Most of us are hip to the antics that unfold when Mercury decides to back up along the zodiac for a few weeks. He starts to move slowly as the month begins and reverses his direction on June 7. The days preceding the retrograde phase and a few days after it ends must be considered as part of the Mercury retrograde phenomena. In other words, we will experience the Mercury Retrograde material from early June until the first week in July. Life doesn't stop, nor grind to a halt, but we can experience all kinds of delays and transportation problems along with all sorts of problems related to business, agreements and other assorted disputes. Rather than wring our hands worrying about what will go wrong, we might want to look at it as a time in which we can right the wrongs and set things straight. That's the whole point of the drill.

We will have myriad opportunities to collaborate and negotiate our way through the complexities we're faced with in our everyday lives. In the midst of Mercury's antics, we have other planetary phenomena to address. The full Moon on June 12 will be important, as it brings our emotions into a heightened state, and we will experience the "he said, she said" state of affairs. Venus opposes Saturn on the same day and some affairs will end as will other types of relationships that have questionable foundations. Remember, it's all an opportunity to sort out the old karmic bonds we carry with us throughout our lifetimes.

Mars is square with Pluto close to the full Moon date adding danger, intrigue, action and drama into the mix. Stay clean and let your works be seen; that's the remedy for this powerful and potent mix of planetary energy. Honesty and peaceful loving energy is needed. Summer begins on June 21 and it just might be time to hit the beach, let your hair down and allow your troubles to slip away.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.



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ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

Lord Mars is still moving very slowly in your opposite sign Libra all month making things touchy and edgy. It won't take much to upset the apple cart so you will have to be on your best behaviour until this energy passes. In the meantime, you can get a lot accomplished by sheer effort.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

The full Moon on June 12 and the days surrounding it are power packed and profound. You might be doing some soul searching as to where you're at and where your true values lie. It could be marriage or divorce time and much is on the line. Weighty decisions must be made and dealt with.



GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

The full Moon on June 12 brings revelations and realizations about many things, especially matters of the heart. Lord Mercury retrogrades most of the month bringing opportunities to reconsider what is what. In true Gemini fashion, you may be of two minds about everything. Things take on a brighter perspective in late June and July.



CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

Intense and dynamic energy continues to flow and it would be worthy to utilize it with the best of your ability. Promote yourself, get out there and mix and mingle. Jupiter is in your sign and you come across as receptive and believable; others get that you are trustworthy, accountable and talented. It's up to you now.



LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

It's all about behind-the-scenes preparation. If you want to achieve something great, now is the time to do the groundwork and make ready for Jupiter's visit to Leo from July 18, 2014 to August 15, 2015. Jupiter brings blessings and abundance especially for those that truly work for it. Go for the gusto.



VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

Read Leo and think ahead, as Jupiter will visit Virgo from mid-August 2015 to early September 2016. Once you've made your plan, get to it, stick to it and you will surely experience some success. Career opportunities present themselves in late June and most of July. Staying steady on the case is best.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

I don't imagine you have been bored recently. If anything, you have probably been very busy with all kinds of commitments and obligations along with a series of sudden or unplanned tasks that had to be dealt with. It's not over yet, as June will be a demanding and active time as well.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Resources are a big key as the month of June unfolds. Earning potential, inheritances and shared monies are big topics now. The full Moon on June 12 will help you see your true state of affairs. It might be time to rethink your strategy. Travel potential presents itself towards the end of the month.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

The full Moon on June 12 takes place in your sign casting light and understanding on your present concerns and objectives. You may have to thread your way carefully in regard to communications and negotiations. Take a break and rest up if you can. You may be a bit frazzled with the amount of obligations on board.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Cappy's are known to be relentless in attaining their objectives. You may very well be successful, but it can be lonely at the top especially if you have mishandled people on the way up. Be a team player and give due respect all the way around. Abuse power and a big backlash takes place.




AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

You get a free pass and are left to your own devices. I suppose that can be good if you utilize your time properly. You're not totally off the hook though. You still have career choices and objectives to deal with. Romantic and social energies intensify and you may be a bit distracted.



PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

Mercury and Neptune triangulate in the first half of June providing you with an opportunity to utilize your highly creative imagination. Lord Jupiter casts a fine ray giving you all kinds of opportunities to carve out your path and put your life together the way you would like it to be. 

Art Sterritt champions democracy vs. pipelines

Art Sterritt, the Executive Director of the Coastal First Nations, has been instrumental in ensuring that both First Nations and other communities are building coalitions so their voices can be heard by government, media and communities. Art's talk at the NoEnbridge Rally at Sunset Beach in Vancouver on May 10 follows.

Wow, what an amazing gathering. First of all, I would like to acknowledge the original inhabitants who are still here and hold title to much of this land.

Chiefs, Matriarchs and all of you noble people, it is indeed my honour to be here. I am extremely humbled today. I've been on a path for about nine years around the Northern Gateway Pipeline project. Coastal First Nations has fought this for many, many years now, but I think they would agree with me that this is the most amazing gathering we've had in the last nine years. So thank you very much for all of that.



We have seen a prime minister who has tried to dismantle all the institutions that have been built over the last 150 years that respected the environment, science, our courts and our politics.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're approaching D-Day, as we're calling it. The decision around Northern Gateway is going to happen sometime in June. Seventy-years-ago, my father and my uncle, my namesake, and many of your fathers and grandfathers landed on the beaches of Normandy to fight for the freedoms that we all enjoy in this country. When we began this journey nine years ago, it was all about a pipeline. It's become much more than that. It's now about democracy.

We have seen a prime minister who has tried to dismantle all the institutions that have been built over the last 150 years that respected the environment, science, our courts and our politics. All of this has been destroyed by this government in the name of big oil.

Coastal First Nations were approached by Northern Gateway nine years ago and asked whether or not we would approve tankers in the Great Bear. It took us three years to come to a final decision on that. We investigated technology to clean up oil – which didn't exist and still doesn't, and looked in Valdez, Alaska, to find out the oil was still in the ground there. We saw what they did in the Gulf of Mexico where they cleaned up three percent of the mess they made there. We've seen what Enbridge has done in the Kalamazoo. And the Coastal First Nations declared a ban on tankers in the Great Bear Sea and that ban will stay in effect forever, ladies and gentlemen!

We said that no good can come of this project. I want to remind you of a couple of things that have happened over the last nine years or so. Ask yourselves as you go through this whether or not our opinion, our learned decision about no good out of Northern Gateway, was true?

Since we began this exercise, very early on in the process, the prime minister silenced all of the scientists who said the project was endangering the environment. They gutted every bit of environmental legislation that was in the way of these pipes, every bit of it. They took a joint review process, flawed as it was, and took all the power away from them because three individuals who knew nothing about British Columbia couldn't be trusted to make a decision. Then they passed it on to a whole cabinet of people who knew absolutely nothing about British Columbia and they'll make that decision sometime early in June. Was that a good trade-off or not? When we have a whole cabinet full of amateurs, why do we need three *continued p.22...*



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Just now an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of *Common Ground*. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.


JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form. 

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...Art Sherritt from p.21

people to do that?

So, we've got some good news for you, folks. Coastal First Nations, all of these first nations are going to be taking Stephen Harper and Northern Gateway to court. Here's the other good news. Harper has pissed off the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, while we haven't. It may be the biggest mistake he's ever made. It seems like if anybody gets in Stephen Harper's way, he throws them under the bus. That's what he's trying to do to the Chief Justice now.

Sheila Fraser did a bad audit on Harper. He threw her under the bus. The Chief Electoral Officer caught these guys with robocalling, illegal electioneering processes which got this bloody government the majority we're suffering with today. They did it illegally and got caught and Harper threw the Chief Electoral Officer under the bus. That's the kind of democracy we've got now. Mike Duffy was so

stupid to get caught so Harper threw him and Pamela Wallin under the bus. Not for what they did, but for getting caught. He threw Patrick Brazeau under the bus for getting caught.

There was one man left in Harper's office who came along who still had a shred of decency: Nigel Wright. He thought, "It isn't fair that Mr. Duffy steals this money from Canadians and I'm going to pay them back." Stephen Harper decided he made a mistake and threw him under the bus. That's what we've got going on in Ottawa right now. Ladies and gentlemen, there's nobody left on the bus! They're all under it! And Stephen Harper is on his way out!

And enough about Ottawa. Alison Redford got caught with her finger in the cookie job as well so she's under the bus in Alberta. And Harper and his ethical oil guys, aka the robocallers, are supporting the Wild Rose Party *continued p.31...*



Midlife crisis or opportunity?

In the midst of our struggle to find out who we are, there are infinite possibilities for beauty and hope and wonder and love. – Mandy Hale

The term “midlife crisis” clearly suggests a problem – a *big* problem. A crisis, after all, implies calamity. Generally, it is used to describe a situation in which an individual in midlife begins to change. Perhaps they are no longer happy and have begun to question what they are doing with their life.

It is often assumed the person is reacting to the aging process and trying to be young again. They may seem restless and want to try new things. They might start a new physical activity, take up a new area of study, attend workshops, explore spirituality or even develop new friendships.

What is usually happening is that the person is becoming conscious about his or her life. There may be an awareness that, for as long as they can remember, they have lived life according to the expectations of others or their own expectation of what they *ought* to be doing.

Indeed, they may feel unsatisfied, bored or even depressed. Life is half over and the life they are living seems to be lacking something. What is missing is growth; they have stopped growing. Now, it must be said that some people are fine with this. They like the security of the familiar and do not welcome change.

Within some, however, is what I like to call a “cosmic time-release capsule.” The soul has come here to express its uniqueness and individuality and suddenly realizes it has not yet done all it came here to do. It is like a wake-up call that says time is running out so it is time to start living life as an expression of who you are at the core of your being.

Often, it is not clear who is at that core; the process is about discovering that. Some see it as a search for their purpose. Interestingly, it is not that different than the

process of moving from childhood to adulthood. Both are times of exploration and discovery. They are also times of making our own decisions and choosing what we really want to do.

This is a time of tremendous opportunity and creativity. This kind of growth should not be stunted. Where the “crisis” comes in is when those close to the person are unset-

**The soul has come here to express its uniqueness
and individuality and suddenly realizes it has
not yet done all it came here to do.**

tled or even threatened by the changes. They may be critical or challenge the new path.

There are no easy answers for this. In truth, it may be the changes *will* take the loved one away. The best course and the most loving one is to respect and honour the changes and to be supportive and interested. Celebrate the growth and undertake some growing of your own.

To try to stop it or control it is like a child trapping a butterfly in a bottle. You might be able to keep it alive and close to you, but capturing that beauty has only made you a witness to its suffering. **K**

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, Deep Powerful Change hypnosis CDs and new “Creating Healthy Relationships” series, visit www.gwen.ca

...Udo from p.9

being done about it.

So I developed a method for making oils with health in mind, which meant protecting them from light, oxygen and heat. Seeds and the extracted oils need to be protected through all the processing we do while pressing, filtering and filling until they're in a dark bottle with a box around them in the fridge. We designed our own machinery to accomplish this.

The standard edible oil industry makes a mess at the front end and uses a chemical feast to clean it up at the back end. I said, “Let's not make a mess at the front end so we don't need the chemicals.”

We started with organically grown seeds, protected them from light, oxygen and heat. I basically was the brains behind the healthy oils industry. “Made with health in mind” was my by-line. Out of that came flax oil because Omega 3's became well known. There wasn't a lot of research when we started, but now we know when we increase them in the diet, we can improve virtually any major degenerative condition over time. It doesn't improve everything because it only improves what the lack of Omega 3's causes, but research says 99% of the population don't get enough of them for optimum health. That shows up in every part of the body because every cell needs it.

That's why we said, “If we could bring Omega 3's back, we could help so many people.” So flax oil was the choice. Plant oil. I was competing not with fish oils but with cooking oils because these are food oils. You

take tablespoons not pills. Out of that came flax. Then I became Omega 6 deficient on flax oil so I said we need to balance the ratio better and out of that came Udo's Oil. We made so many decisions that had to do with raising the standard in a time and in a trade where everybody was lowering the standards. I was driven by desperation and the need to make something that actually improves health.



**Now I have turned health into a
teachable field based on nature
and human nature, which is
a much bigger project.**

I figured if this information could help me, many other people could benefit from what I'd learned so I wrote the book that became *Fats That Heal, Fats That Kill*. We created our little factory that made oil with health in mind. That became flax oil. I worked with a number of other people and we did a tour in 1988 of 35 states, 17,000 miles by road, 85 cities in 101 days from June to September. We literally drove all night and worked all day.

We did the whole tour on raw vegetables because

within the first two weeks we learned if we ate carbs we'd fall asleep and if we ate meat and heavily cooked foods, we wouldn't have energy. So the whole thing was done on raw vegetables and we had energy to burn. We were on fire. We could help so many people. That's how it all started.

I don't have confidence in a lot of areas, but I do have confidence in what I know. I knew the science and the molecules and the needs of the system and the ability to explain it. I had no doubt we'd be successful.

Our small, but dedicated, beginning gave birth to a new industry that is now a billion-dollar industry: flax oil. I didn't have any business training so I did another project and then a third; fundamentally, I've done three successful projects just based on my knowledge and the passion I have for helping people have better health. I've been pretty much an educator in 40 countries and I was made for it. I've done more than 5,000 talks and more than 3,000 media interviews.

Now I have turned health into a teachable field based on nature and human nature, which is a much bigger project. I've got about 7,000 pages of notes, some of them a rewriting of my life and some actually looking at how life created health in nature. We will shift off the disease paradigm when we have a coherent understanding of what health actually is. That is the elephant in the room and that's what I'm addressing. **K**

www.udoerasmus.com

The best of flicks and docs



Mia Wasikowska as the “Camel Lady” in *Tracks*. Courtesy of Hanway Films.

Under normal circumstances, a tournament as big as the World Cup must be a big drain on summer audience numbers. When the four-yearly extravaganza of wall-to-wall soccer takes place in Brazil – a nation famed for its flamboyance and flair on the field – it presents even more of a programming challenge. Vancity Theatre’s answer is to have a soccer-themed series of six screenings, including two films profiling brilliant, but self-destructing, talents: José Henrique Fonseca’s new biopic *Heleno* (23rd, 8.30PM) about the cavalier 1940s Brazilian striker Heleno and Emir Kusturica’s 2008 documentary profile of Argentinian star Maradona, called *Maradona* (July 7, 8.45PM). The “Beautiful Game” series includes a free, live screen-

ing of the tournament’s opening game between the host nation and Croatia (June 12, 12.30PM).

Vancity Theatre also offers its annual Best of Hot Docs showcase. Among the nine titles handpicked from the documentary festival are *I Am Big Bird* (20th, 6.30PM), a tearjerker that won over audiences in Toronto with its story about Caroll Spinney, the man who, for 40 years, has played *Sesame Street*’s Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch. There’s also *Divide in Concord* (21st, 4PM), involving a fiery octogenarian environmentalist, Jean Hill, fighting for a landmark bill to ban single-serve plastic bottles in Concord, Massachusetts. Another that looks fascinating is *Slums: Cities of Tomorrow* (22nd, 6.30PM), which turns on its head the idea that these make-shift cit-

ies are depressed breeding grounds for criminal activity. Rather, as the filmmakers travel through Mumbai, Marseille, the Abitibi region of Quebec, a tent city in the state of New Jersey and a Moroccan slum, they find stories of community and individual resourcefulness and resilience.

The Cinematheque hosts a series of 21 digitally re-mastered and newly-subtitled classics from some of Poland’s most exemplary filmmakers, spanning from 1957 to 1987. The touring series is hand-picked by Martin Scorsese, curated by his non-profit organization, The Film Foundation, and released by Milestone Films. Many of the films reflect a fairly dark and intense Eastern European imagination. Films include the 1970 Oscar-nominated *The Promised Land* (22nd, 23rd), critiquing the ruthlessness of the ruling capitalist class in the 19th-century, the hallucinatory *The Hourglass Sanatorium* (6th, 8th), Wojciech Has’s *The Saragossa Manuscript* (7th, 8th, 9th) and Jerzy Kawalerowicz’s Hitchcockian noir thriller *Night Train* (2nd, 5th).

Out on the 6th is John Curran’s *Tracks*, an inspirational story based on an epic journey by Australian Robyn Davidson, also known as the “Camel Lady.” In 1977, Robyn (Mia Wasikowska) sets out from Alice Springs to the Indian Ocean – a 2,700-km walk through unforgiving desert – accompanied by her dog and four unpredictable camels. She receives occasional visits from Rick Smolan (Adam Driver), a charismatic New York photographer assigned by *National Geographic*, whose intrusions on her solitude Robyn grudgingly allows for funding for her trip. **C**

Robert Alstead is making the documentary *Running on Climate*, www.icycle.ca/runningonclimate



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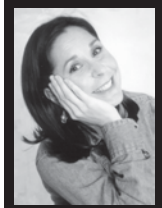
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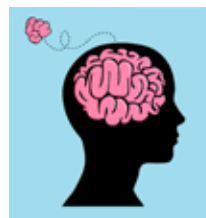
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Refuse to mandate that only Canadian labour be used.

Refuse to mandate even just 1% of total sales flow-

ing through the pipeline be set aside in a special trust fund to be available for quick mitigation and compensation for accidents.

Refuse to be clear and honest in explaining to Canadians that these pipelines will bring about substantial increases in the price of gasoline and diesel in Western Canada.

The last point seems to have been almost completely overlooked by opponents, yet for a typical citizen it carries the most weight. Too preoccupied with earning a living and covering mortgage payments to get involved in environmental issues, they are totally opposed to any policies that drive up the price of gas or diesel. Big Oil has repeated again and again that access to Asian markets will mean 30 or 40% higher prices for tarsands oil. Big Oil has been silent on informing Canadians that refiners in west-

ern Canada will also have to pay these higher prices and substantial increases in oil-based fuels will be automatic.

Citizen groups should communicate the point that gasoline and diesel prices will rise domestically. We will all pay more when we fill up our cars, trucks, buses and boats. This point will resonate with our wallets in all of western Canada. The next Kinder Morgan NEB Harper government hearings will be yet another public PR circus with predictable outcomes for the oil interests, of the oil interests and "buy" the oil interests.

The Harper government's heart is in the oil patch with its petro carbon family values, first and foremost, of tarsands, LNG, crude and pipelines. ☒

For further information, visit www.dogwoodinitiative.org, www.wcel.org, ecojustice.ca and www.davidsuzuki.org

Vibes

Part III

The mystery of consciousness tackled in Tucson

by Geoff Olson

It's an April afternoon in Tucson, Arizona, and the city streets are desert-gulch hot. The air conditioning in the Marriott Hotel is going full blast, along with the sound system. Australian philosopher David Chalmers bounds up the stage accompanied by the pounding intro to the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart Club Band*.

To paraphrase Lennon/McCartney, it was 20 years ago today – with a margin of error of one week – that Chalmers appeared at the first Toward a Science of Consciousness conference in Tucson, organized by the Center for Consciousness Studies. The biennial event is described in its promotional literature as the “largest and longest-running interdisciplinary conference emphasizing broad and rigorous approaches to the study of conscious awareness.”

Since 1994, the University of Arizona-sponsored conference has hosted gatherings of scientists, philosophers, scholars, artists and humanists. For the 20th anniversary, hundreds of academics from across the world travelled to Tucson to present papers on all manner of brain-related topics.

The conference is the brainchild of Stuart Hameroff, a goateed, Tucson-based anesthesiologist who looks more like a long-haul trucker than your stereotypical tweedy academic. It's not hard to understand why Hameroff, who is in the business of putting people to sleep and then waking them up, would have a longtime interest in consciousness. As in past conferences, the fast-talking MD is host, presenter and carnival barker for his own revolutionary theory of the brain and mind.

The opener for the plenary talks was “The Hard Problem: 20 Years On.” The so-called “Hard Problem” was popularized by Chalmers at the first Tucson conference when he was an unknown post-doc at Washington university. Hameroff remembers Chalmers “strutting up and down the stage like Mick Jagger, with hair down to his waist” and “galvanizing” the crowd with his intellectual showmanship.

“The hard problem... is to explain how all the physical processing and all the objective functioning [of the brain] is accompanied by, or associated with, or gives rise to, subjective experience: the conscious experience of the mind... and of the world,” says the kinetic, arm-waving Rhodes scholar and PhD.

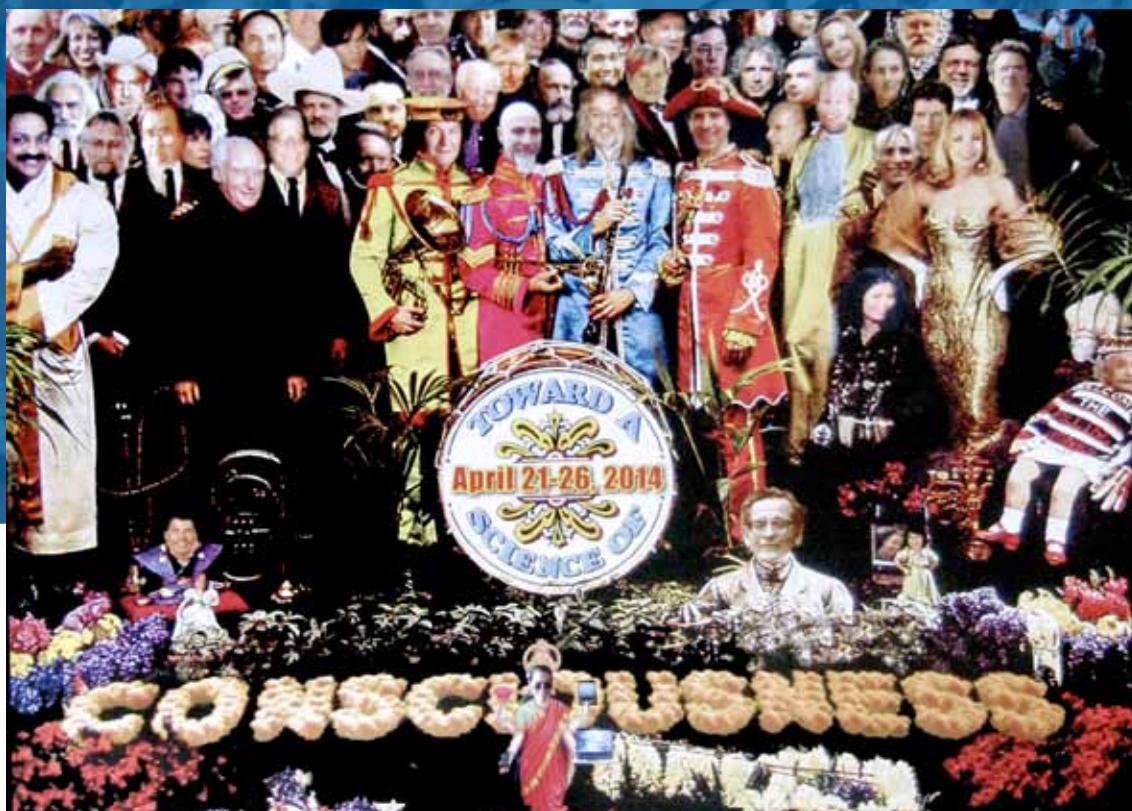


image by Dave Cantrell

How and why do sensations acquire characteristics, such as colours and tastes, in the minds of conscious beings? For example, there is no ‘red’ or ‘middle C’ in the external world. Red is how our minds perceive a certain wavelength of light and middle C is how our minds make sense of a specific pressure wave in the air. These experiences and the sense they are happening to an “I” are what philosophers and scientists call “qualia.”

In his talk, Chalmers pronounced the Hard Problem unsolved. Other speakers, such as author and uber-materialist philosopher Daniel Dennett, insists there is no problem to begin with, that it's essentially a user-generated illusion, along with consciousness itself. After decades of debate, with thousands of citations in pillars of journals and books, the Hard Problem has made for an academic cottage industry, if nothing else.

Chalmers contrasts the Hard Problem with easier problems, such as explaining the ability to discriminate objects in the visual field, report mental states, and so forth. But there are also problems in neuroscience lying somewhere between ‘easy’ and ‘hard.’ Consider, for example, the puzzle of brain waves.

In 1893, a young German calvary volunteer named Hans Berger was riding a horse when he was thrown into the path of an oncoming horse-drawn cannon. For a few terrifying instants, he was certain he would die, but the horses were halted in the nick of time. At that very time, Berger's sister, many miles away at home, had an overpowering sense that her brother was in danger. She insisted their father send him an urgent telegram to check on his state.

Berger was partway through a mathematics degree at the University of Jena with an intention to pursue astronomy, but the telegram altered the course of his life. Convinced his sister had an experience of telepathy and that

some kind of transmitting signal was involved, he returned to Jena to study medicine. His lifelong goal was to identify the physiological foundations of psychic energy.

Eventually, Berger became professor of psychiatry and director of the Jena Psychiatric University Clinic, but his final years were undone by professional humiliation. Forced into early retirement and his laboratory dismantled by Hitler's Nazi regime, he committed suicide in 1941.

Before his unfortunate death, Berger invented what is known today as electroencephalography (EEG), the recording of electrical activity across the scalp. Electrodes connected to a display measure voltage fluctuations resulting from ionic current flows within neurons of the brain.

Berger's ESP-seeking invention turned out to be a lesser boon to parapsychologists than neurologists, who discovered a spectrum of brainwave frequencies, associated with states of consciousness from sleep to wakefulness. This has introduced a new mystery the German doctor would have appreciated.

“If you look at the EEG or an MRI, regions of the brain light up and they correlate with one another. So they'll be oscillations back and forth between different regions of the brain functioning together as coherent units. There is a dance back and forth between different regions of the brain,” says Travis Craddock, a presenter at Tucson who holds a physics PhD from the University of Alberta.

“It remains unknown how these neurons produce synchrony. There's the firing that's going on, but the delicate timing to keep the coherent signalling between the divergent brain regions largely remains unknown,” Craddock observes.

Neurons send signals to each other, but what alerts neurons across the brain to fire in tandem?

“This brings in the idea of some deeper principle, some factors within the neuron,” Craddock adds. Following Stuart Hameroff, he suggests the “subneural

information processing devices” are microtubules, spindly elements that give cells architectural support as part of their “cytoskeleton.”

Back in the eighties, Hameroff noted microtubules are present in greater numbers in neurons than other varieties of cells. These nano-scale structures might also play a role as quantum mechanical information processors, he speculated. To old-school neuroscientists, Hameroff might as well have been Horton hearing a Who, but he found an ally in the respected Oxford theoretical physicist Roger Penrose. Intrigued with the mathematical attributes of the microtubule lattices, Penrose collaborated with the anesthesiologist on a complex, and controversial, theory on how these cellular components access the quantum domain.

The most common objection to the Hameroff-Penrose model is that the warm, wet environment of cells swamps delicate quantum physics. But scientists have since discovered the bizarre properties of the microworld do indeed prevail at larger scales and ambient temperatures, as in plant photosynthesis. With that hurdle eliminated – at least in principle – Hameroff and his microtubule-touting colleagues are in a better position to defend their worldview. Support also came from Jack Tuszyński, professor of oncology at the University of Alberta and MIT materials scientist Anirban Banyopadhyay.

“I know several neuroscientists who published in *Nature* and *Science* and I had arguments with them at MIT where I gave experimental evidence that if you take a cross section of a neuron and try to see what is

inside, it’s a jungle of microtubules. They said, ‘I didn’t know that, why didn’t they put it in the textbook?’” Banyopadhyay observed at the conference with incredulity.

The MIT physicist postulates that bits of quantum information, dubbed qubits, can maintain their coherence in microtubules. While a senior researcher at the National Institute for Materials Science in Tsukuba, Japan, he used the tips from a scanning tunnelling microscope as electrodes to excite a live neuron in a culture into firing. The results indicated microtubules become quantum conductive when stimulated at specific resonant frequencies. For the microtubule team, this proves the textbook paradigm of the brain cell as a biochemical on/off switch is radically incomplete.

Biochemical compounds “dance” when they are exposed to the right “music,” says Banyopadhyay. In his view, the brain’s activity is musical in nature, with the cycles of proteins and microtubules at the high end of the scale.

“Everything is a string of musical notes... the very beauty of nature that continually changes the brain circuits inside you even at this moment. How could [different areas on the brain] synchronize and have a phase relation? How could that happen? The old model could not say,” observes the MIT physicist in his lilting cadence.

In the new model, microtubule quantum vibrations at megahertz frequencies interfere and produce much slower EEG “beat frequencies.”

“Consciousness will be revealed to be more like music than computation,” Hameroff insists at the close of the conference. “Combining with space-time geom-

etry, consciousness will be revealed to be the music of the universe.”

This may sound like sophisticated stoner-speak to old-school neurologists or your family doctor, but it was only a century ago that British physicist Ernest Rutherford discovered atoms were not indivisible units, but composed of smaller particles with astonishing properties. If the ideas of Hameroff and his colleagues are accepted by the wider scientific community, we’ll end up thinking similarly about the lowly brain cell.

As for the persistent music and dance analogies from the microtubule enthusiasts, skeptics might heed the frequently quoted words of Sir Charles Sherrington. In his 1942 book, *Man on His Nature*, the Nobel Prize-winning neurophysiologist painted a poetic picture of activity in the cerebral cortex during arousal from sleep:

“The great topmost sheet of the mass, that where hardly a light had twinkled or moved, becomes now a sparkling field of rhythmic flashing points with trains of traveling sparks hurrying hither and thither. The brain is waking and with it the mind is returning. It is as if the Milky Way entered upon some cosmic dance. Swiftly, the head mass becomes an enchanted loom where millions of flashing shuttles weave a dissolving pattern, always a meaningful pattern though never an abiding one; a shifting harmony of subpatterns.”

And if you’re wondering if the ideas of Hameroff and his colleagues will help solve the “Hard Problem” one day, the answer is a definite ‘perhaps.’ ◀

www.geoffolson.com

...*Art Sherritt* from p.22

in Alberta and are going to try and take over there as well. That’s what we’ve got going around.

I just returned from the capital of Canada, where our prime minister comes from: Calgary. I was at the Enbridge AGM. All is well. We told Uncle Al Monaco, the CEO for Enbridge, “Don’t waste any more money on this Northern Gateway project. Mitigate your losses. You’re not going to win this one. You’re never going to British Columbia.” Mr. Monaco later tweeted that he talked to a Native leader who said he would meet again. So, “all is well.” Likely no need to implement the Eyford Report recommending building a strong relationship with First Nations in British Columbia. Al’s talking to one leader who’s agreed to meet with him so all is going to be well with Northern Gateway and keep investing. That’s what they’ve got going.

A little closer to home, all is also well. The salmon are going to be safe. We don’t need to implement Cohen because Janet Holder has told us 15,000 times that this pipeline is going to protect salmon. Yahoo baby. Do we believe this crap or not? The people of Vancouver and the rest of this province better bloody well get ready because Janet Holder has told us 15,000 times that pipeline routes are better habitat for cariboo than the natural stuff that we’ve got and they’re going to be thundering down on Vancouver after all these pipelines are built. We’re going to have cariboo everywhere because she told us 15,000 bloody times in the last couple of months.

I got a couple more. I’m trying to control myself,

but... Ladies and gentlemen, it’s a self-evident fact. Enbridge Northern Gateway has spent a half billion dollars. Cute little Janet Holder, eh? I look at her and think about Stephen Harper and Maureen with that little panda bear in her lap. Janet is as cute as that panda bear that Stephen Harper brought over in order to consummate our relationship with China.

I went to Norway with a group of people. Janet was along. She has at least 15 pairs of shoes. She changed shoes three times a day on that trip. This little lady that is going to save British Columbia lives in Toronto, but is a British Columbian nonetheless, and is going to save us because this pipeline is going to save our environment. That’s what we’ve got to worry about. Janet Holder is the vice-president in charge of Northern Gateway.

To more serious things: Christy Clark is in Asia protecting all of us and our environment as we speak. She has taken a little walk down Harper road. She has changed the Park Act to allow them to go in there and investigate for pipelines. I wonder what they’ll do when the investigation is over. Christie Clark, you’d better sober up quick if you think you’re going in our parks. She has given the Oil and Gas Commission authority over allocating water. Well, that makes a helluva lot of sense because in order to move water you need either a tank, or a pipe. I think that’s probably about the extent of the logic this provincial government engaged in when they decided the Oil and Gas Commission was now in charge of water in the northeast and along the route.

Can you imagine the logic and amount of intelligence that goes into making those kinds of decisions? What next, Christie? Are you going to roll over on Northern Gateway? Are the five conditions that you put out there just about ready to roll over? I’ll guarantee you that First Nations aren’t rolling over and that condition number four will never ever be met.

So, Stephen Harper, Christy Clark, Uncle Al Monaco, Janet Holder and your 15,000 ads and Alberta – we’re ready. We’ve been ready for a while. I’m getting sick and tired of waiting. I want them to try and come and bring that pipeline through this province. The First Nations in this province are going to stop them dead in their tracks.

Ladies and gentlemen, something even bigger than all of that and you represent that here today; these people are going to get a lesson in democracy they haven’t had in a long time and they bloody well need it. All of you are going to have your say and these pipeliners are gonna sober up pretty damn soon.

So, this land that we call home, which nourishes us, we get all our food off of it, all our water and this air we breathe is some of the cleanest in the world. This water we have out here connects all of the Coast Salish, all the people up the coast to the Haida. We’re gonna make sure they clean up their act before they come knocking on our door again.

Thank you. And thank you for being here. I love every one of you. ◀

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JUN 4

Evolution Revolution: You have the power to alter the course of your life and others in every moment. 7:30PM Sharp at the Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak Street at 41st. With Duane O' Kane RCC and Catherine O' Kane RCC. Complimentary tickets by emailing clientservices@clearmind.com or \$20/door.

JUN 8

Veg Expo: Come explore the truth about GMOs from world-renowned expert Jeffrey M. Smith. A day for the entire family. For more information and tickets, check out vegexpo.ca

JUN 8

J.Krishnamurti: Meditation and the Thinking Machine. Free DVD showing refreshments dialogue. Church of Truth Victoria 2-5PM. Whenever JK lectured on subjects such as freedom truth and meditation, his clarity allowed people to see themselves and the world in a new way. We address these and other topics together through dialogue: purposeful awareness of the mind when listening which allows us discover each subject anew and to share our spontaneous insight as it arises. www.meetup.com/The-British-Columbia-Krishnamurti-Group/krishnamurtigroup@live.com www.krishnamurti-canada.ca, 604-354-1534

JUN 13-15

Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Friday Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JUN 14

Join us for B.C.'s Rallies to Support Everyone's Human Right to Opt Out of our undemocratic, provincially mandated Smart Meter program. Rallies will host prominent speakers. The Lower Mainland rally takes place in Burnaby Fraser Foreshore Park (Noon-2PM), across from Smart Meter headquarters, 9265 Glenlyon Pkwy; And in Victoria at the Victoria Legislature; and in Nanaimo and Salmon Arm. www.citizensforsafetechnology.org, 604-536-2296.

JUN 16 & JUL 9

Free Shamanic Power Initiation & Open House hosted by the Institute of Shamanic Medicine. Jun 16: 7PM, Commercial Drive. Jul 9 Venue TBA. Vancouver. RSVP at info@shamanicmedicine.ca or call 778-227-2939. www.shamanicmedicine.ca

JUN 19

Langara College Health & Human Services Information Session: 5-7:30PM, 601 West Broadway, Unit M-11. See website for the evening's schedule. Learn more: 604-323-5926, holistichealth@langara.bc.ca www.langara.bc.ca/hhs

JUN 19

Next Steps in the Proof of Heaven: With Dr. Eben Alexander, a neurosurgeon who journeyed into the afterlife and Dr. Marilyn Parking, Medical Intuitive. St. Andrew's Wesley United Church, 6-9 PM. \$55 plus GST. Call 604-535-0521 or tickets at Banyen Books, 604-739-7912. Also in Calgary June 18, Knox United Church. Pre-registration only online: www.mmedicalintuitive.com

JUN 20-22

250hr Level One – Introductory Weekend: Professional Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy Apprenticeship Annual program for yoga teachers & serious yogis. www.islandyogavista.com

JUNE 21

Singer/Songwriter Roy Zimmerman in Concert returns to Vancouver for another evening of political satire. Saturday, 7 pm, \$20, Centre for Peace, 1825 W. 16th Ave. Tickets at Banyen Books or brownpapertickets.com/event/684047

JUN 21-22

Daoist Secrets of Nutrition Workshop: Sat-Sun, 10AM-5PM, \$55 each day at Master Sha's LPH Centre, 1280 Odium Drive, Vancouver. www.mastershasoulhealingcentre.vancouver.com

JUN 22

J.Krishnamurti: Meditation and the Thinking Machine. Free DVD showing refreshments dialogue. Vancouver Public Library 7th Floor Board Breakout Room 1-4PM. "It is a most extraordinary thing that although most of us are opposed to political tyranny, we inwardly accept the authority of another to twist our minds and our way of life. If we completely reject all so-called spiritual authority, all ceremonies, rituals and dogmas, it means that we can come near to that infinite, immeasurable, reality." www.meetup.com/The-British-Columbia-Krishnamurti-Group/krishnamurtigroup@live.com, www.krishnamurti-canada.ca, 604-354-1534.

JUN 26-29

Eagle Valley Retreat in beautiful Squamish Valley. Renew yourself through fasting & restorative yoga. Call for more information: 604-729-3120, archerinthemountains@gmail.com, eaglevalleyretreat.com

JUN 27-29

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JUN 29

Adventure into Time and Beyond with Rifa Hodgson presents Past Life Regression Workshop – Life Karma, 10:30AM-1:30PM, West Vancouver. Ambleside, Silk Purse, 1570 Argyle Ave. Registration \$75, former clients-\$70, 1-888-606-8463, www.lifebetweenlives.ca/past_life_workshops_events.htm

JUN 30

The Art of Living a Peaceful and Happy Life, a holistic, practical and spiritual talk with Charles Hogg, international speaker & meditation teacher. Monday, June 30th, 6:30PM at Centre for Peace, 1825 West 16th Ave, Vancouver. Admission free. Please phone Vancouver Brahma Kumaris Meditation Centre, 604-436-4795 to book your seat. vancouver@ca.brahmakumaris.org

JUL 9-13

Developing Heart: The Human Journey: Learn transformational exercises that help you connect and relate to people without attempting to change them. With Marilyn Atkinson PhD. At Hollyhock, Cortes Island, BC. 1-800-933-6339, www.hollyhock.ca

JUL 13

Fleetwood Multicultural Fair/Market Second Annual Surrey event: Free, donations welcome. Fleetwood Community Centre, 84 Ave. @159. We are on Facebook.

JUL 18-20

Vancouver Folk Music Festival: From Joan Baez and Andrew Bird to Ozomatli and Frank Yamma, from Alberta to Zimbabwe, the 37th Annual Vancouver Folk Music Festival brings a world of music to one of the world's most beautiful festival settings, right in your own back yard. With over 60 acts. Join us for the best weekend of your summer. http://thefestival.bc.ca

JUL 18-20

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JUL 24-27

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Kaslo Jazz Etc. Summer Music Festival: Stunning vistas, great acoustics and superb musicians combine to create the Festival. The unique floating stage rests just offshore a little, sandy beach on Kootenay Lake. www.kaslojazzfest.com

AUG 17

Latin Summer Fest Vancouver: Free Admission, Cultural Family event, Trout Lake Park 11AM-7PM, www.latinsummerfest.com

ONGOING

Sacred Journeys to Peru with Traditional Curandero (healer) Jhaimy Alvarez-Acosta. August and October, 2014. www.childrenofthe7rays.com info@childrenofthe7rays.com.

Science of Spirituality – Richmond, Vancouver – Jyoti (Inner Light) Meditation for Self-knowledge and God-realization. Present living Master: Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj. Always FREE. Further Info, Linda: 604-985-5840, www.sos.org

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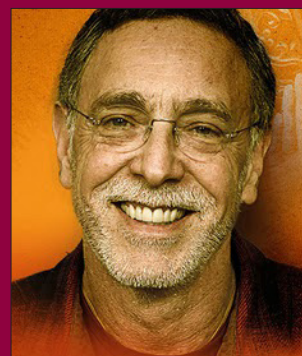
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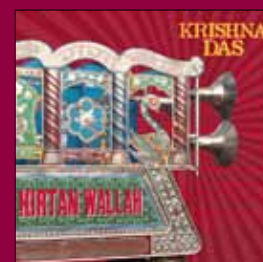
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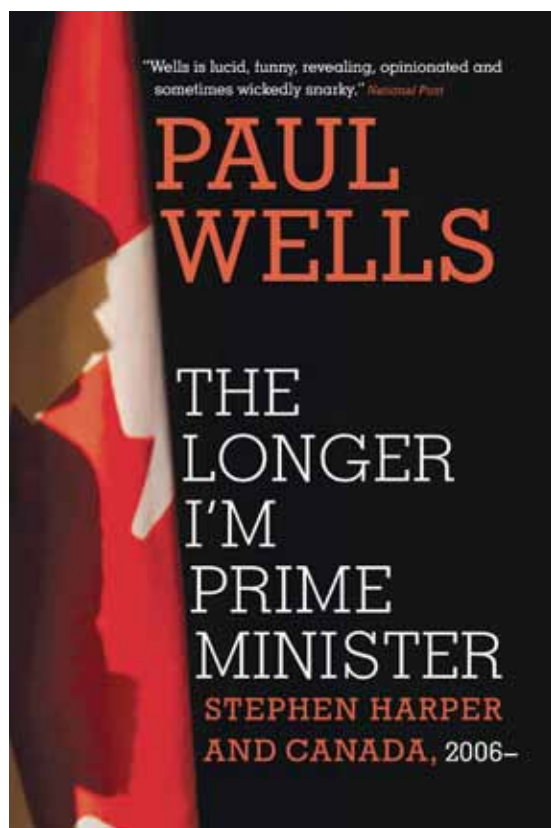
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Call it Harpocracy

most of our history.

Replacing it with a west-based coalition, supported by immigrants in Ontario, sharing “family, social and economic values,” he’s a shrewd tactician facing long odds and divided opponents. Detractors despise him for the same reasons, but haven’t figured him out, strategically glossing over the calculated manipulation of his base.

The Longer I’m Prime Minister refers to Harper’s sharp shift right. “You won’t recognize Canada when I’m through with it,” he bragged, entering office. Wells reports, “It cannot be emphasized often enough that Harper’s goal is to win on his own terms... to ensure Conservatives govern as frequently and durably as Liberals have” and “to hobble any federal government after it. His greatest challenge is to dismantle the modern welfare state.”

Harper’s legacy will only seem small. Other leaders see themselves as “builders. He’s a skeptic and, to use the gentlest word available, an editor,” writes Wells. His central thesis: Harper’s “arch-incrementalism” is all about making change, not by revolution, or even evolution, but by erosion, boiling frogs, deaths by a thousands cuts.

Harper deliberately “flattens prose, removing memorable turns of phrase and identifiable ideas from his speeches.” Trying hard not to be interesting, he takes out action verbs and phrases like “we must” or “I will never” in case he subsequently has to do something completely different.

At rare press conferences with despised media, he answers five questions, not six, limiting anything off-message, such as categorizing the 2008 financial meltdown as “an excellent stock-buying opportunity.” Or remarking, off-handedly, that the Ford family’s “great Conservative political dynasty” includes Mayor Rob’s “cleaning up the NDP mess in Toronto” while he fixes the “left-wing mess federally.” (No comment on the crack video.)

Harper only deviates to buy time, belatedly running stimulus deficits, recognizing Quebecois as a nation “within a united Canada,” apologizing for residential schools, aborting pro-life discussions, moving forward, machine-like. As Homer Simpson said, “Just because I don’t care doesn’t mean that I don’t understand.”

One insightful episode – when Harper headed the National Citizens Coalition in 2001 – is the notorious “Firewall Letter” to then-Premier Ralph Klein to “build firewalls around Alberta,” limiting aggressive, hostile federal governments. That desire, Wells reveals, remains Harper’s prime, obsessive directive.

The book’s chronological narrative revisits Parliamentary prorogues, turbulent coalitions, medical isotopes, Afghan detainees’ crises, Stéphane Dion’s hapless campaign and attack-ad-worthy Ignatieff. There’s Maxime Bernier’s carelessness with classified documents and girlfriends, Bev Oda’s \$16 orange juice, overhauling and tampering with the Elections Act and campaign contributions, reducing independent oversight and regulation, while positioning himself as even-handedly piloting the country. Unapologetic, insistent on talking about the economy exclusively,

more brazen in his trickery, more determined, even subversive in his vision.

Transforming Canada requires retaining power. After all, America’s right-wing makeover took Reagan two terms, followed by two Bushes, to complete.

Small actions do add up. Furious with Obama’s Keystone delay, he turned to China. “Streamlining” environmental reviews, shuttering dozens of libraries and research centres, literally burning or land-filling centuries of data, under the pretext of digitizing records, slashing millions, while subjecting environmental charities to tax audits, he muzzled his MPs, scientists and civil servants and circumvented debate. The public is still catching up, as Canada’s ranking plummeted to last among OECD countries for environmental protection, earning a reputation as a reckless, rogue petro-state. “I wished Americans were more like Canadians, until you elected Stephen Harper,” Robert F. Kennedy Jr., recently quipped.

When Wells delves deeper, it’s delicious. Harper claims to ignore media, but wife Laureen briefs him over breakfast and his TV news is served up by Fox. When he yells at staffers, they’ve won his confidence. With a profound ability to not care about being hated, he holds a grudge like no-one else in Ottawa (which is saying something). A backstabbing lieutenant to Preston Manning, he values loyalty to himself, above all. But he’s not a man with a lot of friends.

Wells predicts, “He will stay as long as he can win, leaving if, and only if, it’s clear he can’t.” The front-line battle over resources has the most dynamic resistance. The *Guardian* observed, pipelines “do not build a nation, but swindle it” – short-term profit-reaping rather than diverse, sustainable growth, while compromising civil liberties, democratic integrity and environmental safety.

Harper’s grip seems to slip as the reader turns the pages. The book ends before the demise of Jim Flaherty, of course, and the outcome and dimensions of ongoing scandal and flawed policy, “menacing the CBC,” hinting that Harper may ultimately be a self-unmade man, with no heir apparent.

In the meantime, Wells documents one man’s rigid adherence to his own philosophy, fuelled by regional grievance, laying waste to heritage, environment and unprotected citizens. Harper cuts taxes for the wealthy, dismantling the federal government in favour of resource extraction and his base. *The Longer I’m Prime Minister* makes another cut, a clear-cut one: A well-defined choice for voters. **K**



Paul Wells, Maclean’s political editor, wrote *The Longer I’m Prime Minister* to shed some light on the man.

If Canada’s 22nd Prime Minister runs in the “fixed” federal election on October 19, 2015, despite the outcome, only Chretien, Laurier, Trudeau, Macdonald and King will have held power longer. Increasingly successful over a decade, secretive and confounding, Stephen Harper is – in a phrase from another PM, Winston Churchill – “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.”

With decades of reporting experience, Paul Wells, *Maclean’s* political editor, wrote *The Longer I’m Prime Minister: Stephen Harper and Canada, 2006–* to shed some light on the man. “I wasn’t sure if it was possible to write a book that readers would enjoy, given how polarized perceptions are. But it seems to be working,” Wells said, accepting the \$25,000 Cohen Prize, “for a subject that shapes or influences thinking on Canada.”

“I wished Americans were more like Canadians, until you elected Stephen Harper,” Robert F. Kennedy Jr., recently quipped.

Wells added, “Harper couldn’t win elections without widespread support. Which suggests he has what every successful federal leader has needed to survive: a superior understanding of Canada.” Or at least a 40-ish% understanding, enabling a highly craved majority. He seems to be one of them, a ‘small-c,’ hell-bent on making this county Conservative. Underestimated or caricatured as a robotic control freak, dull, plodding, yet inscrutable, Harper burst the central political/media/business elites’ bubble, which ruled for

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